



The President's Daily Brief

25 January 1972

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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Laotian irregulars recaptured the rest of Skyline Ridge yesterday, but the Communists remain in a strong position to strike anywhere in the Long Tieng area. (Page 2)

The Soviet Union and some of its Warsaw Pact allies may try to inject the issue of Communist China's role in the Communist world into the Pact summit meeting that begins today. (Page 3)

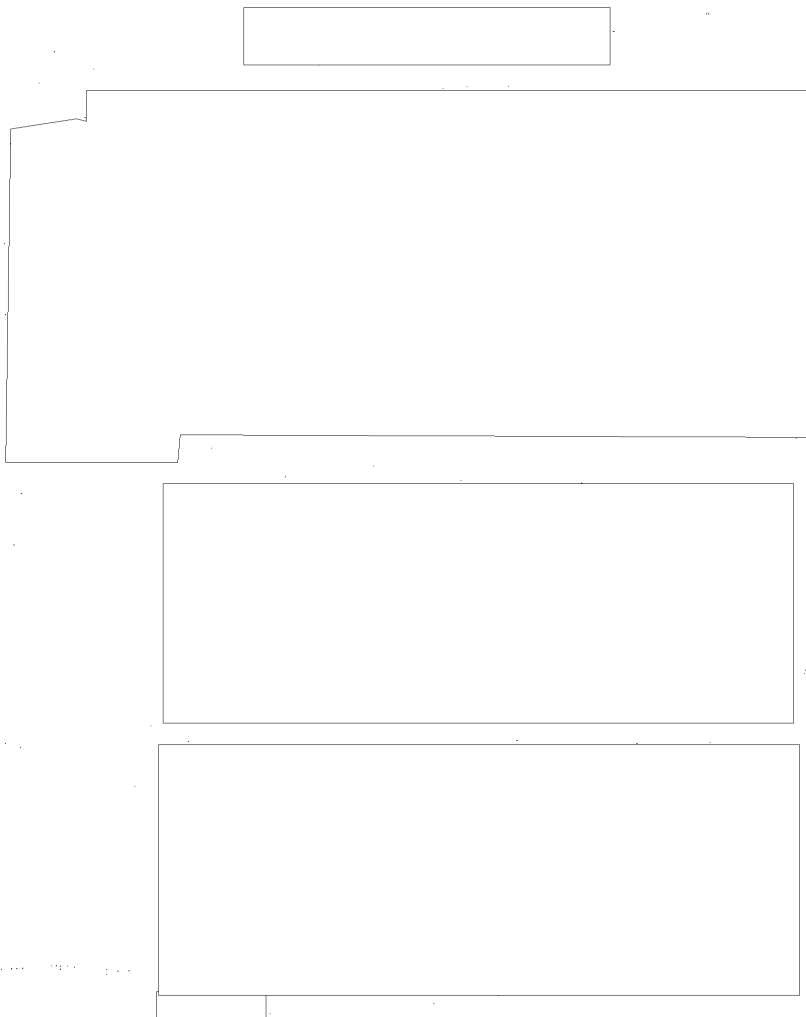
The Israelis are making it clear they will not tolerate an increase in fedayeen attacks based in Syria. (Page 4)

[REDACTED] Soviet [REDACTED]
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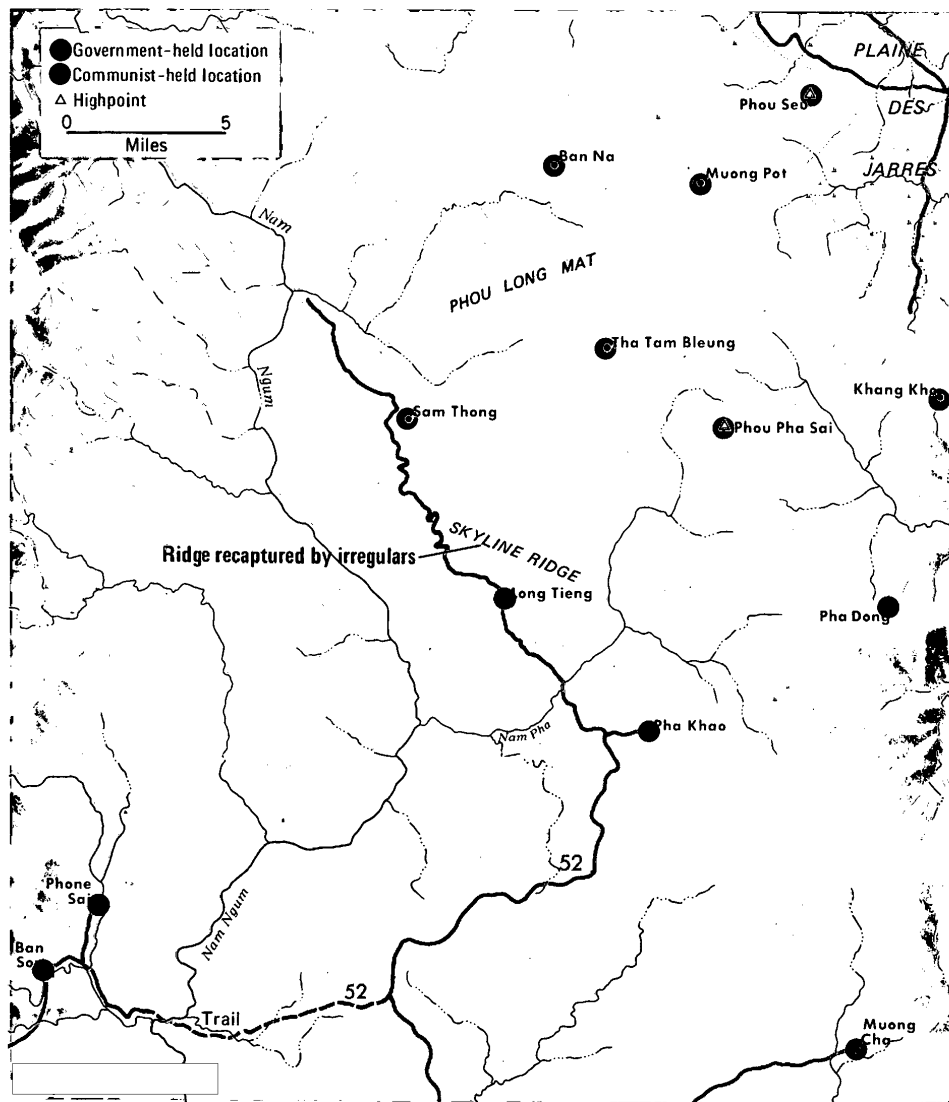
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LONG TIENG AREA



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LAOS

Yesterday an irregular unit recaptured, without resistance, the last helicopter landing pad on the eastern end of Skyline Ridge. Most of the government units involved in the week-long struggle for the ridge now have been pulled back into the Long Tieng valley, leaving two battalions holding the ridge. Two fresh irregular battalions moved into Long Tieng yesterday, and additional reinforcements are scheduled to follow in the next few days.

The North Vietnamese decision to abandon the last position suggests that casualties and supply difficulties had finally incapacitated their units. The North Vietnamese apparently did not choose to throw in fresh troops from the six other infantry regiments in the Long Tieng area. Their strategy may have been to tie down and deplete the government's best units--the four irregular battalions that bore most of the fighting suffered over 25 percent casualties--while improving their own lines of communication and shifting men and supplies into position for a new assault. With enemy units now deployed south and west of the valley, new attacks could be directed either at the ridge or against Long Tieng itself.

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WARSAW PACT

On the eve of today's political summit meeting in Prague, several East European states have intensified their propaganda attacks on China. Soviet criticism of the Chinese has, of course, been running at a high level since the Indo-Pakistani conflict and the UN General Assembly session. Polish and East German articles in the past week specifically attack Peking's "splitting activities" in the socialist world and its "diplomatic maneuvers" in the Balkans.

Warsaw and Pankow seem to be fronting for Moscow on this issue, and Bucharest is the unspecified but obvious target. The Romanians, who have been subjected to this kind of performance before, will strongly resist any efforts to push through a resolution condemning Peking and will seek to confine the meeting to questions of European security.

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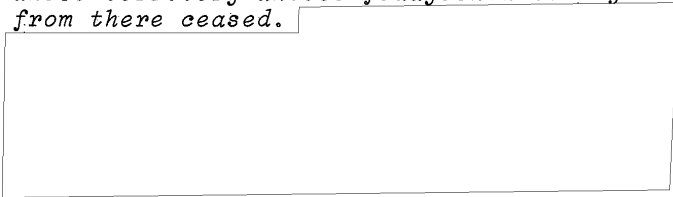
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ISRAEL-SYRIA

The Israelis are justifying their air strike yesterday against a fedayeen camp north of Daraa in Syria as retaliation for recently increased fedayeen activity in the Golan Heights. They also charge that the character of this activity indicates cooperation between the Syrian Army and the fedayeen, implying that Israeli counteractions may not spare Syrian Army units and bases.

The increased terrorism in the Golan Heights area reflects the recent shift of fedayeen operations from Lebanon to other areas along the Israeli border. The shift is the result of Israel's recent raids into Lebanon and its threat to occupy Lebanese territory unless fedayeen activity from there ceased.



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